



Head Start Program Facts

Fiscal Year 2015

Established in 1965, Head Start promotes school readiness for children in low-income families by offering educational, nutritional, health, social, and other services. Since its inception, Head Start has served more than 32 million children, birth to age 5, and their families. In 2015, Head Start was funded to serve nearly one million children and pregnant women in centers, family homes, and in family child care homes in urban, suburban, and rural communities throughout the nation.

(More on Head Start)

Throughout this fact sheet, unless otherwise specified, the term "Head Start" refers to the Head Start program as a whole, including: Head Start services to preschool children; Early Head Start (EHS) services to infants, toddlers, and pregnant women; services to families by American Indian and Alaskan Native (AIAN) programs; and services to families by Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) programs.

The term "funded enrollment" refers to the number of children and pregnant women that are supported by federal Head Start funds in a program at any one time during the program year; these are sometimes referred to as enrollment slots. Funded enrollment numbers include enrollment slots funded by state or other funds when used by grantees as required nonfederal match. States may provide additional funding to local Head Start programs, which is not included in federal Head Start reporting.

The term "cumulative enrollment" refers to the actual number of children and pregnant women that Head Start programs serve throughout the entire program year, inclusive of enrollees who left during the program year and the enrollees who filled those empty places. Due to turnover, more children and families may receive Head Start services cumulatively throughout the program year, all of whom are reported in the Program Information Report (PIR), than indicated by the funded enrollment numbers.

Federal Funding

Coming soon. See the **2014 Fact Sheet** for the most current information available.

Federal Funding and Funded Enrollment by State

Coming soon. See the **2014 Fact Sheet** for the most current information available.

Program Year Statistics

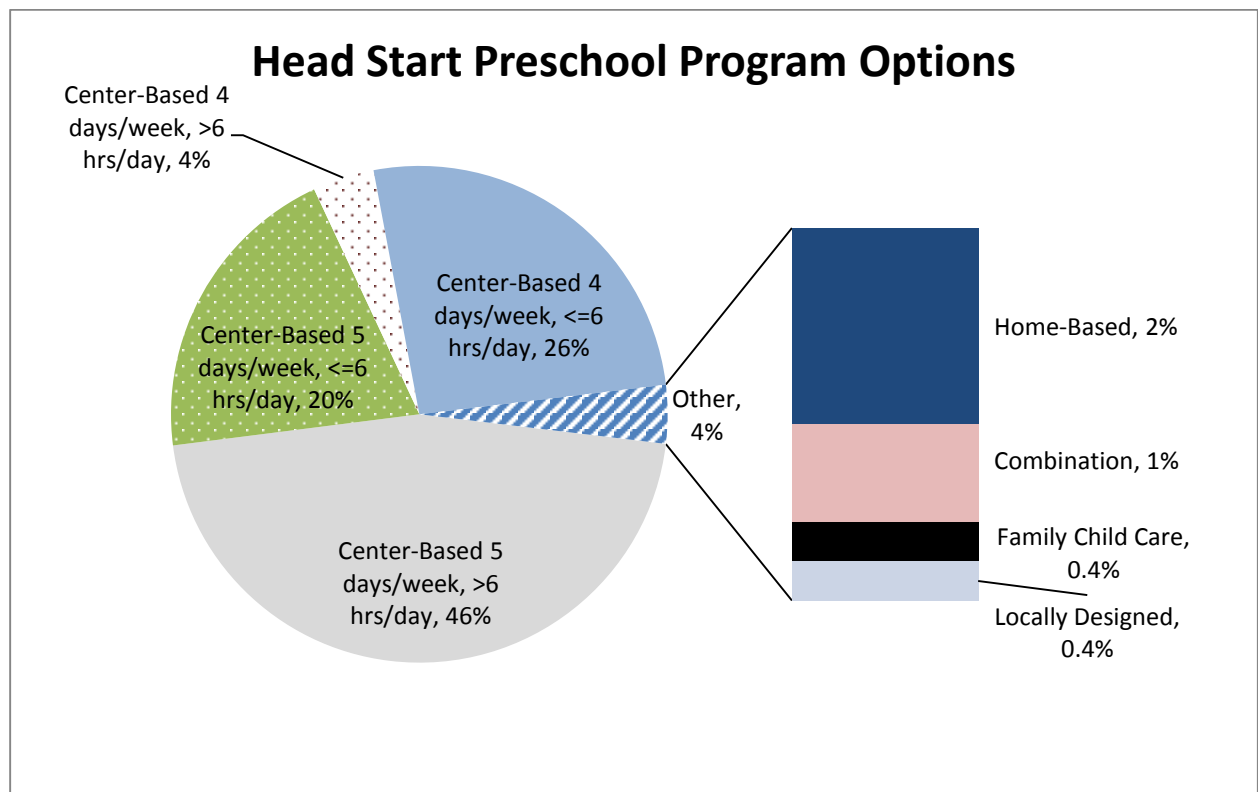
Each year, Head Start programs are required to submit PIRs on the services they have provided to children and families throughout the program year, including child, family, and staff demographics and program characteristics.

For a copy of the PIR form, detailed reports, data sets for the 2015 PIR and prior years, and for further information, please visit <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/pir>.

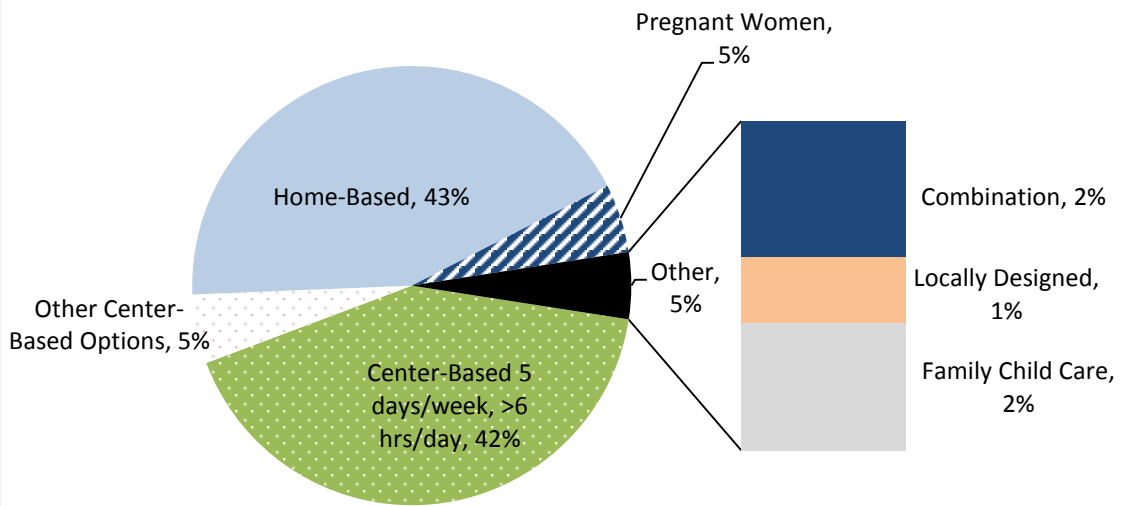
Program Characteristics

- Forty-one percent of grantees operated Head Start preschool services only
- Fourteen percent of grantees operated EHS services only
- Forty-five percent of grantees operated both Head Start and Early Head Start services

Most Head Start preschool services were provided in center-based settings that, based on local design, vary in the number of days per week and hours per day classes are in session. About half of EHS services were provided in center-based settings, and half were offered in home-based program settings.



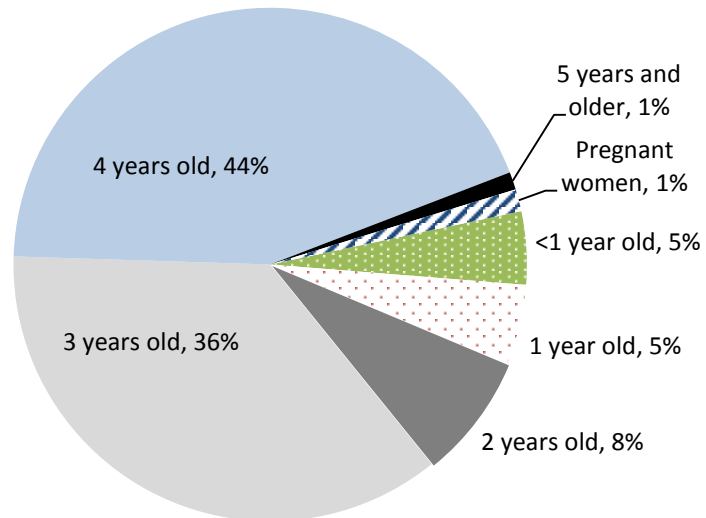
Early Head Start Program Options



Child and Family Demographics

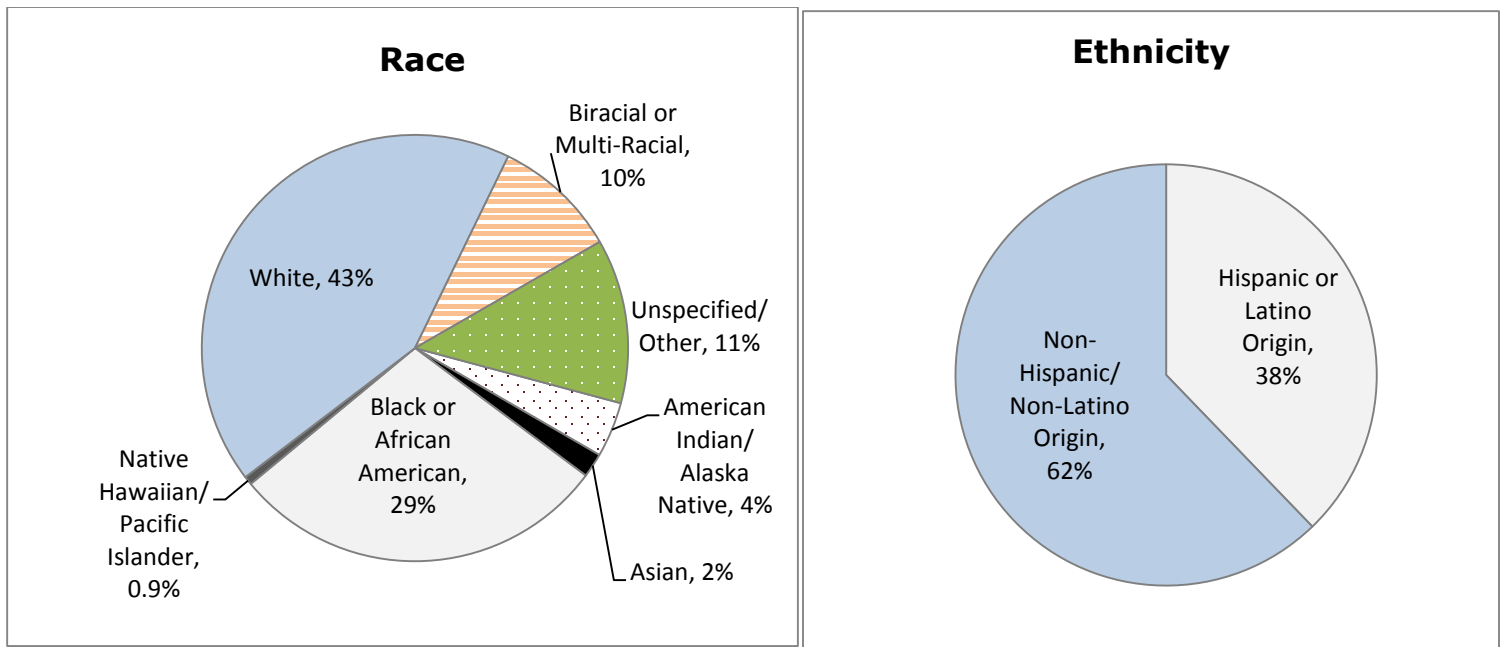
Head Start programs cumulatively served 1,100,000 children ages birth to 5 and pregnant women throughout the 2014–15 program year.

Cumulative Enrollment by Age



Head Start served a diverse group of children, families, and pregnant women. Thirty-eight percent identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino, and almost 29 percent were Black/African American.

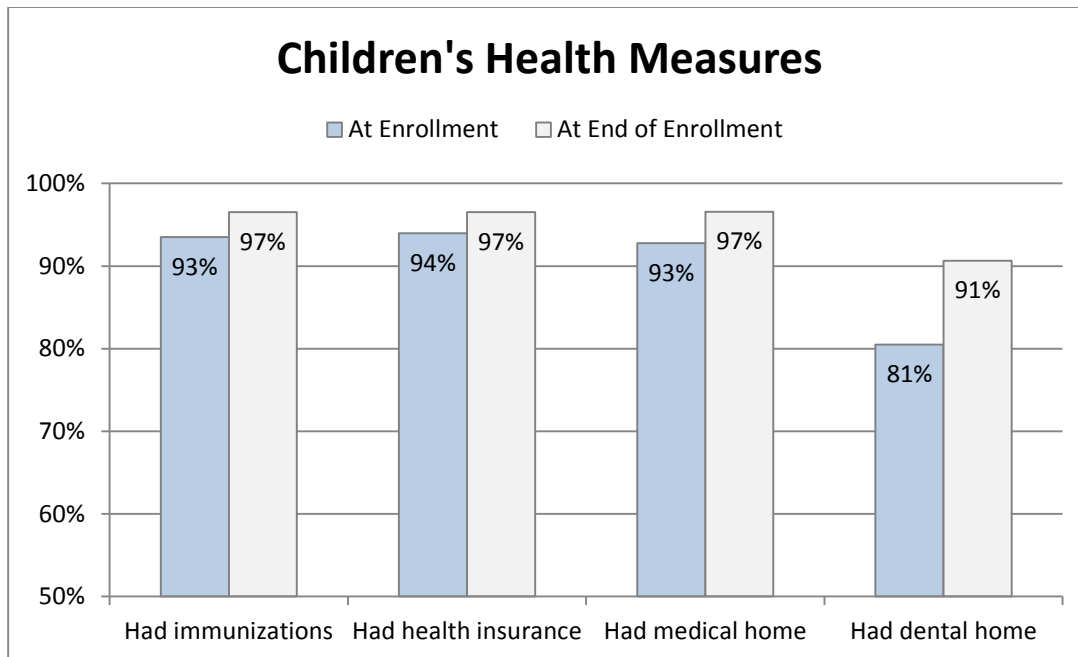
Families were asked to self-identify both an ethnicity and a race category based on U.S. Census Bureau measures. For example, a family that identifies their child as Black and Cuban was counted in the "Black or African American" race category for the race question and counted in the "Hispanic or Latino" category for the separate question on ethnicity.



Twenty-nine percent of participants were from families that primarily spoke a language other than English at home. Nearly 25 percent of participants were from families that primarily spoke Spanish at home.

Services to Children and Families

Head Start programs work with families to help ensure children have access to needed services and resources. The number of children who received immunizations increased from the beginning of the program year to the end of the program year. Also, more families had health insurance and medical and dental homes for their children at the end of the 2014-15 program year than at the beginning.



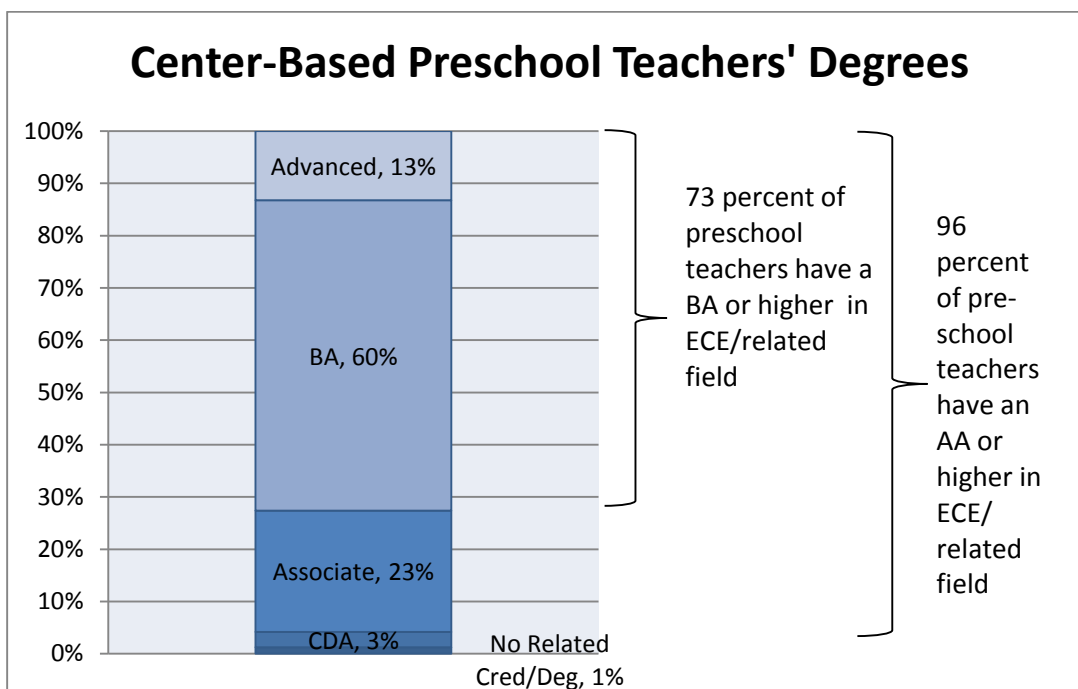
Head Start programs work with families to ensure they have the means to obtain health insurance, services for children with disabilities, adequate housing, job training, and more. In fiscal year (FY) 2015:

- Most children had public health insurance. At the end of the program year, 89 percent of children were enrolled in Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), or a state-funded child health insurance program.
- Twelve percent of Head Start cumulative enrollment was made up of children with disabilities, defined as children having special plans under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). In comparison, nationally, about three percent of infants and toddlers and six percent of preschool-age children have identified disabilities. Head Start serves a greater percentage of children with disabilities than found in the overall population.
- Among pregnant women enrolled in EHS, approximately 90 percent received prenatal education on fetal development and 20 percent had medically high risk pregnancies.
- Head Start served about 1,007,000 families cumulatively throughout the program year. The number of families served is a little less than the number of participants served, since some families have more than one child enrolled.
- Approximately 47,000 families served during the enrollment year experienced homelessness. Of those families, 33 percent found housing during the program year. Nearly 86,000 Head Start families received housing assistance such as subsidies, utilities, and repairs.
- Approximately 207,000 families, or 21 percent, received services related to job training and adult education such as general education development (GED) programs and college selection.

Program Staff

Head Start programs employed and contracted with 243,000 staff. Parents of current or former Head Start children made up 24 percent of Head Start staff.

- More than 1.1 million adults volunteered in their local Head Start program. Of these, 782,000 were parents of Head Start children.
- About 120,000 staff members provided child development services to children, including teachers, assistant teachers, home visitors, and family child care providers.
- Among child development staff, 30 percent were proficient in a language other than English.
- Seventy-three percent of all Head Start center-based preschool teachers had a baccalaureate degree or higher in early childhood education, or in a related field with experience. The Head Start Act specifies that 50 percent of center-based preschool teachers nationwide should have had these credentials by 2013.



Head Start Federal Funding and Funded Enrollment History

Coming soon. See the [2014 Fact Sheet](#) for the most current information available.